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ABSTRACT

An exploratory study focused on teacher participation in the decision-making processes of personnel selection in public schools. A stratified random selection procedure was employed to select a sample of public school teachers (kindergarten through 12th grade) in a large midwestern state. The survey was mailed to a total of 305 teachers, 60 percent of whom responded to the questionnaire. Results indicated that teachers are rarely involved in the selection of teachers or principals. Teachers in rural districts reported the highest levels of participation. Teacher satisfaction with teacher selection is reported, as well as teacher satisfaction with principal selections. In response to questions about interest in participating in the selection of teachers and principals, teachers indicated a strong tendency for participation. Six conclusions that have important implications for personnel selection practices and for further research areas are presented. A model for meaningfully involving teachers in personnel selection practices is included, showing how both teachers and administrators can contribute to the process. Also included is an annotated list of references. (MD)

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The Selection of Teachers and Principals: A Model for Faculty Participation in Personnel Selection Decisions in Public Schools

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Decision making is one of the most important and complicated processes in school organizations. Because of the increased complexity of school organizations and the expanded role of teachers within those settings, decision making, once thought to be primarily an administrative function, has evolved into a mutually shared responsibility involving critical tasks carried out by teachers and administrators. Decisions involving the selection of personnel are crucial to the achievement of the major aims of schools. The exploratory study reported in this paper focused on teacher participation in the decision-making processes of personnel selection in public schools.

Lipham (1974, 1976) developed a useful typology for examining decision making in schools. He identifies three dimensions to the decision-making construct--content, involvement, and stages. In this study, decision content relates to the selection of teachers and principals, decision involvement is the role teachers have in this process, and how and to what degree teachers are personally involved in this process relates to decision stages.

The investigation was guided by two major research questions. What level of participation do teachers currently experience in the selection of fellow teachers and principals? Do different levels of involvement, personal involvement or by representation, affect the satisfaction that teachers express in selection decisions which are made in their schools?

Though not specifically focused on teacher involvement in personnel selection decisions, a rich body of research has contributed to

current knowledge on shared decision making in schools and other organizations (Alluto & Belasco, 1973; Bridges, 1967; Lipham, 1979; Flannery, 1980; Dunstan, 1981; and Friesen, Carson & Johnson, 1983). However, only a few items in the decision involvement matrices treated teacher participation in employment decisions.

Dunstan (1981) cited five major advantages to increased levels of participative decision making by teachers--human growth and development, more willing acceptance of decisions, enhanced quality of decisions, enhanced sense of belonging, and the satisfaction of teachers' desires for democratic structures. Mohrman, Cooke and Mohrman (1978) reported that teacher participation in decisions was most appropriate when decisions were of central concern to the teacher. Hoy and Miskel (1982) elaborated the notion of "zone of acceptance" as it related to teacher participation in organizational decision making. Two criteria, personal stake and degree of expertise, were tests of relevance for the desire for level of decision involvement and range of acceptance of decisions made.

In terms of personal stake and expertise in the issue of teacher and principal selection, key questions are: How important is the selection of fellow teachers and principals to classroom teachers? How can teachers be involved meaningfully in the selection process? What benefits are there for the teachers themselves and for the organization? Teachers do vary in their preference for involvement in shared decision making (Cronkite, 1973; Friesen, et al., 1983). That being the case, the major purpose of this research was to examine the level of teacher involvement in personnel selection. It further investigated the

relationship of teachers' personal involvement (or by representation) in teacher and principal employment decisions and teacher satisfaction with selection decisions.

A review of the major summaries of personnel selection and interview research (Arvey & Campion, 1983; Castetter, 1976; Harris, McIntyre, Littleton & Long, 1979; Schalock, 1976; Schmitt, 1976) revealed few empirical studies which investigated the role of teachers as co-decision makers in the selection of teachers and principals in public schools. Maguire (1983) suggested that the use of teachers in interviewing teacher candidates developed a higher sense of professionalism by expanding the organizational responsibilities of the classroom teacher as well as overall goals of the organization. A study by Sparks (1981) found that principals advocated increased participation of teachers in decision-making processes, including personnel selection, in order to satisfy teachers' desires for increased participation and control in their organizational work life.

Methodology

To answer the major research questions a survey instrument was designed to measure the types and levels of teacher involvement in personnel selection processes in schools and the corresponding levels of satisfaction with their involvement in the process and with the outcomes of the final hiring decisions. The data gathered in the survey were of three types--Likert scaled items, checklist items, and open-ended responses.

The survey instrument was piloted in graduate classes of educational

administration. Since the majority of these respondents were public school teachers, their initial responses to specific items were valuable for refining the instrument and generating additional research questions. A second piloting of the instrument was done to establish the reliability of specific items on the questionnaire. Graduate students in a course on personnel selection were given the survey. Two weeks later, the survey was re-administered. Reliability coefficients for the individual items ranged from .76 to .90. Based on these coefficients, the instrument was believed to yield fairly stable responses.

A stratified random selection procedure was employed to select a sample of public school teachers (K-12) in a large midwestern state. Because it was believed that factors such as student population, socio-economic conditions, community settings, and types of school district might affect to varying degrees teacher involvement in personnel selection practices, five strata representing these differences were identified: central city, independent city, suburban, rural, and very wealthy districts.

Based on the 1983-84 school year teacher employment data recorded with the State Department of Education, and proportional to their number in the population, 305 public school teachers were selected from the five strata and received the survey instruments by mail. After two weeks, a second mailing was sent out. Table 1 indicates a total return of 183 questionnaires which represents 60.0% of the total. Though non-responses do represent a threat to the data in that those responses might be different, the rate of return and its distribution among the strata were deemed as acceptable for the analysis.

Findings

As noted earlier, questionnaires were distributed to a random sample of teachers in five distinct school-community categories. Total responses returned numbered 183 or 60.0%. Six responses were not usable in the data analysis process. Thus all calculations are based on a total of 177 responses. Table 1 indicates the number of useable questionnaires returned from teachers in each category and the respective response rates.

Table 1

Response Rates by Community Categories

	Questionnaires Sent	Questionnaires Returned	% Returned
Central City	64	36	56.3
Independent City	45	26	56.6
Satellite Com.	75	46	61.3
Rural Dist.	87	52	59.8
Very Wealthy Dist.	33	17	51.5

Teacher Involvement in Selection Decisions

The responses indicate an extremely low level of involvement of teachers in the selection of fellow teachers and of principals. Furthermore, there is little difference in their rate of involvement in the selection of teachers and their rate of involvement in the selection of principals. There is little difference among the school-community

categories as to levels of involvement either.

Only 10 teachers (5.6%) among the total respondent group reported having been personally involved in the selection of a fellow teacher in the last three years. Among those, only two (1.1%) described themselves as heavily involved. The teachers also report that in 90 percent of their districts there is no teacher involvement (a response of 1 or 2 on a 7-point rating scale) in the selection of teachers.

Teachers in independent cities reported the highest level of participation in the last three years with two teachers (7.7%) indicating involvement (see Table 2). Teachers in satellite communities reported an involvement level of 6.5% (3 teachers). Teachers in the very wealthy districts indicated an involvement rate of 5.8%; that figure is based on one positive response, however.

Table 2

Teachers Reporting Personal Involvement in the Selection of Teachers in the Past Three Years

	Teachers Responding	Teachers Personally Involved in Teacher Selection	% of Involvement
Central City	36	1	2.8
Independent City	26	2	7.7
Satelitte Com.	46	3	6.5
Rural Dist.	52	3	5.8
Very Wealthy Dist.	17	1	5.8

There is slightly greater variance in the responses regarding the knowledge of teacher participation within the school building in the process of selecting other teachers. Teachers indicated that as few as 3 percent of the buildings in a category (central city) had any teacher involvement (ratings of 3-7 on the scale) in the teacher selection, and as many as 19 percent of the buildings within a category (rural) had some involvement (see Table 3).

Table 3

Levels of Teacher Involvement in the Teacher Selection Process

	Teachers Responding	% Reporting No Involvement of Teachers	% Reporting Some or Heavy Involvement of Teachers	Total %
Central City	36	97.2	28.0	100
Independent City	26	92.4	7.6	100
Satellite Com.	46	89.1	10.9	100
Rural Dist.	52	81.0	19.0	100
Very Wealthy Dist.	17	88.2	11.8	100

Clearly all of these data indicate that teachers are rarely involved in the selection of their fellow workers; they report neither personal involvement in the process nor knowledge of the involvement of other teachers.

The responses regarding teacher involvement in the selection of principals differs very little from the data reported on the selection of teachers. There is very little teacher input in the selection of

principals, and there is little variance among the categories of communities as to teacher involvement in the process.

Only six teachers among the total respondent group (3.6%) reported that they were personally involved in the selection of a principal in the last three years (see Table 4). Among those six persons, only one categorized the involvement as "heavy" (6 or 7 on the rating scale). The teachers report that in 83.6 percent of their buildings there is no teacher involvement in the selection of principals. This figure is slightly less than 90 percent rate of no involvement in teacher selection.

Table 4

Teachers Reporting Personal Involvement in the Selection of Principals in the Last Three Years

	Teachers Responding	Teachers Personally Involved in Teacher Selection	% of Involvement
Central City	36	0	0
Independent City	26	1	3.8
Satellite Com.	46	3	3.5
Rural Dist.	52	1	1.9
Very Wealthy Dist.	17	1	5.8

Teachers in the satellite communities reported the highest level of participation with 6.5%, and the central city respondents reported no personal participation by teachers in the selection of principals in the last three years. Only one central city respondent (2.8%) reported

knowledge of teacher participation in the selection of principals within the school. The data clearly indicate that neither the levels of participation nor the variance in level of teacher participation in the selection of principals is more than negligible. However, there is slightly more variance in the data regarding knowledge of teacher participation in the selection process than there is in the data about personal participation (see Table 5). The range of some participation

Table 5

Levels of Teacher Participation in the Principal Selection Process

	Teachers Responding	% Reporting No Involvement	% Reporting Some Or Heavy Involvement
Central City	36	97.2	2.8
Independent City	26	88.5	11.5
Satellite Com.	46	93.5	6.5
Rural Dist.	52	73.1	26.9
Very Wealthy Dist.	17	82.3	17.7

(indicated by a rating of 3-7 on the scale) runs from 2.8% among the central city respondents to 26.9% among the respondents from the rural districts. This is obviously a significant difference in the level of participation. It is interesting to note that only 6 of the respondents (3.4%) indicated that teachers in their systems were heavily involved in the process of selection of principals.

A display of figures regarding both teacher and principal selection (see Table 6) shows quite clearly that central city teachers report

the least involvement in either process. It is also obvious that teachers in the rural districts report the highest level of participation among their colleagues, although their personal participation is not the highest.

Table 6

A Comparison of Levels of Teacher Involvement in Teacher and Principal Selection

	Reporting Personal Involvement		Reporting Teacher Involvement	
	Teacher Selection	Principal Selection	Teacher Selection	Principal Selection
Central City	2.8%	0%	2.8%	2.8%
Independent City	7.6%	3.8%	7.6%	11.5%
Satellite Com.	6.5%	6.5%	10.9%	6.5%
Rural Dist.	5.8%	1.9%	19.8%	26.9%
Very Wealthy Dist.	5.8%	5.8%	11.8%	17.7%

Those teachers who reported personal involvement in the process of the selection of other teachers performed a variety of selection tasks. Half of the 10 persons reporting personal involvement in the selection process participated in interviews of candidates. Four of them indicated that they screened papers, and four were actually involved in the decision to hire a candidate. There was also a small amount of participation in the processes of checking references, observing candidates teach, evaluating teaching materials, and creating job descriptions.

Teachers who reported personal involvement in the selection of

principals (6) displayed a somewhat different pattern of participation. All of them were involved in the interviewing process and in the making of the hiring decision. Half of them (3) screened the candidates' paper materials as well, and one reported involvement in the writing of a job description. It is clear from these data, although based on a very small sample, that persons involved in the selection of principals were given a more significant role in the total process than were those teachers involved in the selection of their peers. Teachers selecting principals participated in an average of 2.7 tasks (53%) while those selecting teachers participated in an average of 1.9 tasks (27%).

Thus we can conclude that among most teachers and in most school buildings, there is little teacher input in the decision-making involved in the selection of building level professional staff. If there is some form of teacher involvement in decision-making at the building level it is not generally in the selection of staff that this activity is played out.

Teacher Satisfaction with Selection Decisions

Teachers also reported their degrees of satisfaction with the selection decisions made with respect to teachers and principals. They were given an opportunity to rate their satisfaction on a scale from 1(low) to 7(high). Ratings of 1 or 2 were viewed as meaning very dissatisfied, ratings of 3, 4, or 5 indicated neither dissatisfaction nor satisfaction, and ratings of 6 or 7 were labeled very satisfied on the questionnaire.

Teacher satisfaction with teachers selected is reported in Table 7. It is most interesting to note that central city respondents, the group that reported the least involvement in teacher selection, appears to be highly ambivalent about the results of that selection process and also indicates the least satisfaction of any of the categories of teachers. The independent city teachers reported the highest personal involvement in the selection process and now report the highest level of dissatisfaction with teacher selection results. They do show more satisfaction than the central city teachers. What seems most clear in the data is the fact that system participation in the selection of teachers was

Table 7

Teacher Satisfaction with Teachers Hired

	Very Dissatisfied	Neither Satisfied Nor Unsatisfied	Very Satisfied
Central City	0%	88.2%	11.8%
Independent City	16.0%	68.0%	16.0%
Satellite Com.	11.3%	61.3%	27.4%
Rural Dist.	8.3%	56.2%	35.5%
Very Wealthy Dist.	0%	62.5%	37.5%

highest in the satellite (10.9%), very wealthy (11.8%), and rural (19.8%) districts. Those districts also report significantly higher levels of satisfaction (27.4%, 37.5%, and 35.5%, respectively, of their responses were in the category of very satisfied). In fact, a rank ordering of categories from high to low participation is exactly like a rank ordering of high to low percentages of responses in the very

satisfied category.

Teacher satisfaction with principals selected is reported in Table 8. At first glance one notices that there is less ambivalence about principals, especially among central city teachers, and that in fact there is a higher level of extreme dissatisfaction with principals than there was with teachers. Nearly 30 percent of the independent city teachers reported that they were very dissatisfied with the principals selected. They also reported the lowest level of satisfaction.

Table 8

	Very Dissatisfied	Neither Satisfied Nor Unsatisfied	Very Satisfied
Central City	20.0%	57.1%	22.9%
Independent City	29.2%	54.2%	16.6%
Satellite Com.	17.1%	65.9%	17.0%
Rural Dist.	10.5%	50.0%	39.5%
Very Wealthy Dist.	11.8%	67.7%	33.5%

While a rank ordering of levels of participation in the selection process for principals does not parallel the levels of satisfaction with the results quite so neatly, it is clear that there is a strong correlation. The significantly higher levels of participation in rural and wealthy districts is matched by significantly higher levels of satisfaction with the outcome of the process.

A question regarding the respondents' satisfaction with the selection processes themselves, as opposed to the outcome of the processes, reveals much higher levels of dissatisfaction than did the

question about satisfaction with the people who were hired as a result of the process. Levels of high dissatisfaction with both selection processes (see Tables 9 and 10) are higher than the levels of high satisfaction with both processes, except in the case of the very wealthy

Table 9

Satisfaction with the Process for

Teacher Selection

	Very Dissatisfied	Neither Satisfied Nor Unsatisfied	Very Satisfied
Central City	23.0%	74.2%	2.8%
Independent City	30.2%	66.0%	3.8%
Satellite Com.	29.0%	66.6%	4.4%
Rural Dist.	31.5%	62.2%	6.3%
Very Wealthy Dist.	11.8%	71.5%	17.7%

Table 10

Satisfaction with the Process for

Principal Selection

	Very Dissatisfied	Neither Satisfied Nor Unsatisfied	Very Satisfied
Central City	36.2%	55.5%	8.3%
Independent City	36.8%	52.0%	12.0%
Satellite Com.	42.3%	53.3%	4.4%
Rural Dist.	44.0%	42.0%	14.0%
Very Wealthy Dist.	6.7%	60.0%	33.3%

districts where the teachers seem to be generally more satisfied with both what occurs (process) and what results from the occurrence (persons hired). It is also interesting to note that teachers are more dissatisfied with the process for selecting principals (except in the very wealthy districts) than with the process for selecting teachers. At the same time they express a higher level of satisfaction regarding the process for selecting principals than with the process for selecting teachers. They are obviously more opinionated about the selection of their superiors than they are about the selection of their peers. While the rank ordering from high to low levels of satisfaction with the outcome of the teacher selection process matches exactly a high to low rank ordering of the levels of satisfaction of the teacher selection process itself, there is more variance in a similar rank ordering of the principal selection outcomes and process. Nevertheless the correlation is a strong positive one.

An analysis of the responses of those persons reporting personal participation in the selection of teachers (10) reveals mean scores of 4.8 and 4.7 in terms of their satisfaction with the outcome of the teacher selection process and with the process itself. The means for the total population were 4.43 on levels of satisfaction with the outcome and 3.38 on satisfaction with the process. While the number of respondents indicating personal participation is too small to provide valuable data, it does suggest a higher level of satisfaction for those who participate in the selection of teachers.

Those personally involved in the selection of principals (6) reported mean satisfaction levels of 4.1 and 5.1 on the outcomes and the

processes of principal selection. This is in contrast to the mean satisfaction levels expressed by the entire population of the study, which are at 4.22 with outcomes and 3.28 with the process itself (see Table 11).

Table 11

Comparison of Levels of Satisfaction

	Teacher Selection		Principal Selection	
	Outcomes	Process	Outcomes	Process
Total Population	4.43	3.33	4.22	3.28
Personally Involved Teachers	4.8	4.7	4.1	5.1

Again the numbers are too small to provide a basis for a valuable comparison.

In response to open-ended questions about their interest in participating in the selection of fellow teachers and building principals, the respondents indicated a strong tendency in favor of teacher participation. Across all categories, 76 percent of the teachers expressed an interest in being actively involved in the selection of other teachers, and 78 percent wanted to participate in the selection of principals.

What was apparent was that essentially the same respondents were interested in participating in both selection processes. Among the 76 percent-78 percent of the total group, however, there was a qualitative difference in the emphasis they placed on the importance of teacher participation in teacher selection and in principal selection.

They expressed much stronger feelings about their involvement in the selection of principals. Teachers felt that principals had the potential for having much more impact on their daily work life. Only if teachers were in team units or departments was there much concern about the effect of fellow teachers on their work life. This finding is similar to Weick's notion of classroom teaching as a loosely coupled system as well as Lortie's (1980) assertion of individualism which characterizes teachers. Teachers can isolate themselves from fellow teachers if they choose. However, principals seen as bosses, governors of daily affairs, and performance evaluators could not be so easily blocked out of teachers' daily work lives.

Despite their strong desire for participation, few of the teachers, however, mentioned a desire for exclusive decision-making authority regarding the hiring of teachers or principals. They did articulate areas in which they could make particularly valuable contributions to the total selection process. Teachers viewed themselves as having some unique insights into the nature of teaching: "teachers are more aware of what makes a good teacher than are most principals." They viewed themselves as having the ability to evaluate teaching potential, to assess the ability to handle non-instructional duties, and to be intimately knowledgeable about content areas. Perhaps most important, they claimed the ability to judge a candidate's potential for fit in the system, addressing the realms of personal, instructional, and environmental compatability.

The respondents named specific activities in which they would be most comfortable in making their contributions to the selection process.

Most important to them was having a role in the development of the selection criteria; that is, the definition of a good teacher. They also felt that they were effective in observing teaching candidates, screening candidates, evaluating experience, and making recommendations for hiring.

The respondents also expressed reasons for their desires for participation. They viewed their involvement as a step toward professionalism and toward validating the importance of those persons in the teaching role. They also affirmed their participation as a means of building the kind of collegial support for which they felt a need.

The respondents who indicated a preference for no involvement in teacher selection cited a number of reasons for that position. They did not see teacher selection as their job, nor did they share a sense of collective responsibility for the health of the system. They also contended that they had neither the skills nor the time to participate. And finally they viewed the selection process as a political one that was very difficult to affect.

Teachers emphatically asserted a number of reasons for their involvement in the selection of principals. They contended that they had the ability to assess the candidates' sensitivity to the myriad concerns of teachers, to judge the candidates' compatibility with staff, community, and school philosophy and to assess a candidate's human relations skills. They also felt that they could evaluate the candidates' ability to handle discipline, that is, the likelihood that the candidate would meet their expectations for the principal's role in the management of student discipline. And finally, some expressed

a need to determine "if the candidates know anything at all about the education of children."

The respondents asserted several positive outcomes of their involvement in principal selection. Similar to responses about their involvement in the selection of fellow teachers, involvement would enhance the importance of the teachers' role and develop a sense of harmony and team work among staff. Teachers believe that their participation would help to eliminate the political "games" common to the hiring process, and that it would insure continuity of philosophy, policy, and programs. Perhaps most important, the involvement of teachers could help to avoid later conflicts that might arise as a result of poor fit between the principal and the system.

Those who indicated a preference for not being involved in the selection of principals (22%) gave a number of reasons for their position as well. They cited lack of time, the difficulty in getting teachers to agree on the criteria for a good principal ("a good principal is not necessarily a popular one"), lack of expertise, and the inability to impact the political nature of decision making.

The reasons given for teacher participation in the selection process are reflective of the values of the respondents. Hence, they often reflect the combatability (to quote one respondent!) of teachers and administrators, and in some cases, they display disagreement among the respondents. Nevertheless, they do suggest some direction toward the achievement of organizational health through participation in decision making.

Conclusions and Discussion

Based on the findings there are six conclusions which have implications for personnel selection practices in schools and for further research into the role of teachers in the selection of fellow teachers and administrators.

1. There is a marked discrepancy between the current levels and types of involvement by teachers in personnel selection processes and teachers' desire for involvement in the process.

2. Based on an analysis of responses to open-ended questions, teachers believe they have unique skills and perspectives which they can contribute to the process of selecting school personnel.

3. Though the data do not permit a test of statistically significant differences between those teachers with high levels of involvement versus those with little or no involvement and their accompanying degrees of satisfaction with the selection decision processes and outcomes, there is some reason to believe that higher levels of participation may be positively related to satisfaction in both the process and outcome of personnel selection decision making in schools.

4. Teachers expressed more satisfaction with the process of selecting principals than they did with the outcomes of that process, that is, the person who was ultimately hired.

5. Teachers expressed more dissatisfaction with the principals hired and indicated a greater desire to be involved in the selection of principals.

6. In response to open-ended questions, there was a sense of "my role, my perspective, and my insight" versus that of administrators.

This took on a me-them mentality which is dysfunctional to shared decision making in the selection process.

The six major conclusions cited above have important implications for personnel selection practices in public schools and for further research. Teachers do in fact want to be involved in the selection of fellow teachers and principals. However, there is a subtlety in terms of how teachers see themselves involved in the total process. Few teachers saw the selection of personnel as solely their responsibility. In fact, teachers saw themselves in supportive and consultative roles making recommendations on selection criteria, processes and candidates. In this respect, teachers were able to articulate a clear sense of how they could meaningfully contribute to selection procedures. Teachers are selective about their desire for involvement. They do not want to be involved just for the sake of involvement or for any abstract notions of participative decision making. They believe they offer unique qualities to the process. Resonating the findings by Conway (1978), the widest gaps between actual and desired levels of shared decision making by teachers are in the area of appointment of staff.

A pilot study using a similar instrument (Bredeson & Gips, 1983) indicated that administrators view teachers as being much more involved in the selection process than teachers do. This is similar to findings by Knoop and O'Reilly (1977). Based on these findings, it is crucial that administrators and teachers communicate their expectations and desires as they relate to personnel selection decisions. Whether administrators are simply unaware or if they are

ignoring the desire of teachers to be more involved, teachers need to make a stronger case for their involvement and the benefits which accrue to the process and to the organization as by-products of greater involvement.

It is clear from the reasons cited by respondents for greater teacher involvement in personnel selection that there is a need to improve the criteria, assessment tools, and individual skills which teachers and administrators use to evaluate and choose their colleagues. Teachers see the improvement of selection criteria, evaluation instruments and their own assessment skills as valuable contributions to the process and to decision outcomes--the teachers and administrators who come into their schools.

There is a need to replace the adversarial model of principal teacher relations with one which is characterized by a mutual sense of professional integrity, responsibility and commitment to commonly held school goals and values. Certainly the employees who are chosen are to a great degree the organizational statements (products) of this sense of professional accord. Shared decision makir is not useful if it becomes a political game or a way of posturing for more power. The true value of participative decision making comes in how all parties have knowledges, skills, attitudes and perspectives which are enriching factors, not competing ones.

The involvement of teachers in personnel selection processes is an investment in the human resources of schools. Investment connotes notions of risk and capital. The risk is that such involvement could have some unknown negative side effects which nearly 25 percent of the

respondents indicated as reasons teachers should not be involved in selection. The risks associated with greater teacher involvement in personnel selection processes in schools are similar to those related to any investment. One can never be certain of investment outcomes. Risk is an accepted condition tempered by the promise of significant returns on the initial investment. In the case of greater teacher participation, the potential outcomes and their accompanying by-products are the most positive aspects contained in the teacher participation prospectus.

In addition to the direct benefits to the selection processes and their outcomes, there are a number of by-products such as an increased sense of teamwork, staff harmony, and professionalism among teachers and principals. The capital needed is the time for teachers to be involved. This time commitment by teachers must not take away from their teaching and planning time. Nor should teachers be expected to be ready consultants after school, at night, and on weekends. Release time and extra contractual days are several ways to facilitate the needed investment of time by teachers.

Recognizing the limitations associated with the response rate and with the small number of respondents who indicated significant levels of involvement in teacher and principal selection, there is a need to go beyond mere numerical data to identify not only levels of participation and satisfaction but underlying reasons. Personal interviews with teachers who are involved as well as those who are most dissatisfied would be useful in trying to present a better description of the nature of teacher involvement, the desire to change

current practices and processes, and the likely effects which would accrue to schools.

The data in this study hinted at the notion that higher levels of teacher participation may be positively related to greater satisfaction with both selection processes and outcomes. Whether or not greater participation in personnel selection has any effect on a teacher's general satisfaction with his/her professional work life and whether such participation is related to the internalization of and the commitment to the system and its goals needs to be investigated.

Responses to questions dealing with why teachers should be involved in the selection of fellow teachers and administrators yielded a variety of claims about the benefits to the process and to the organization in general of such participation. The validity of these claims needs to be addressed.

Finally, the discrepancy between administrators' and teachers' perceptions of teacher involvement in personnel selection needs to be examined. Is the difference real or is it simply a matter of interpretation? Further research would provide insight into these queries.

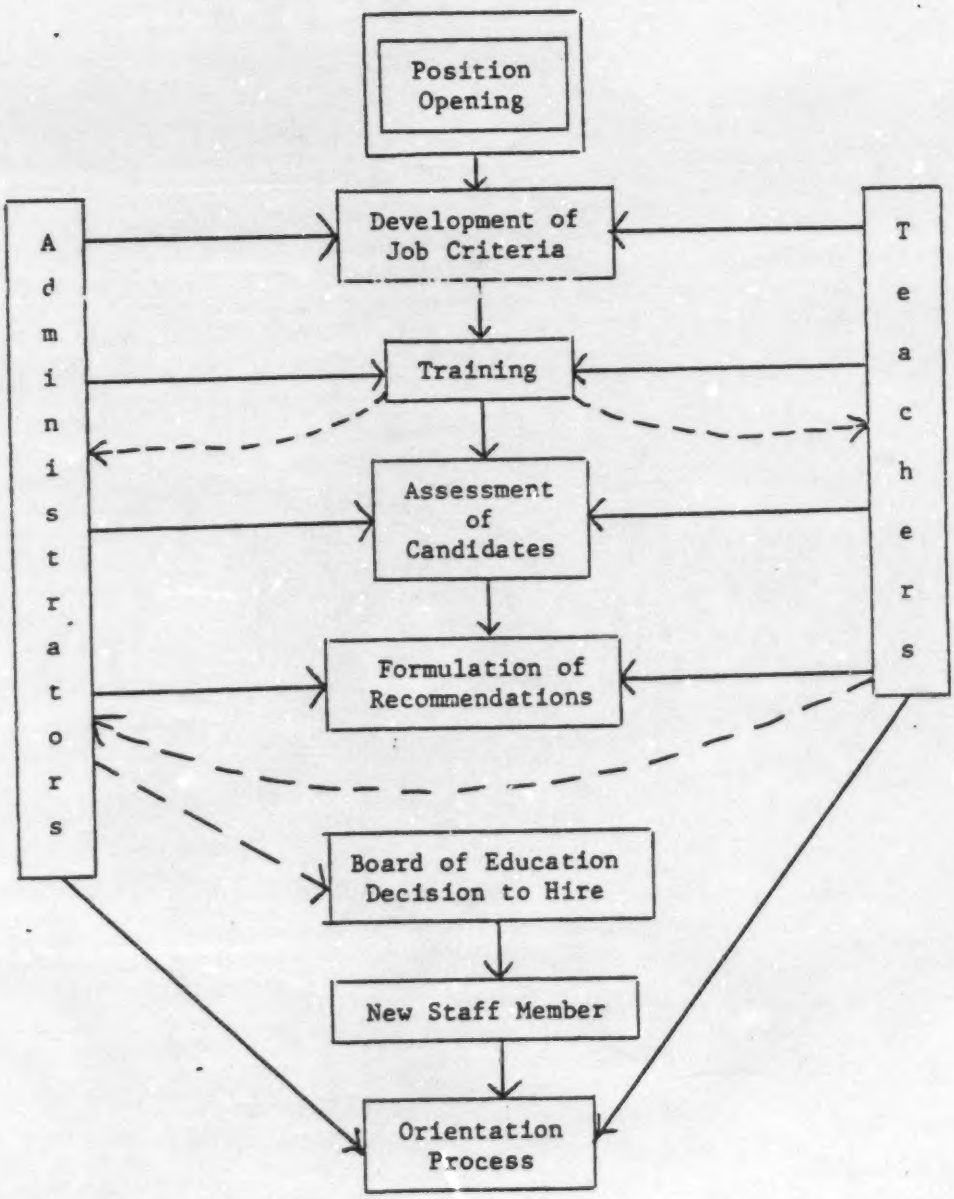
Based on the findings and their implications a model (Figure 1) for meaningfully involving teachers in personnel selection practices in schools is suggested. A position opening, administrative or instructional, offers an opportunity for cooperative planning and shared decision making in schools. The figure indicates a flow of selection activities with input from teachers and administrators to particular tasks. Based on the findings, the development of job related criteria and selection criteria is a major activity in which teachers

Figure 1

A Model for Teacher Participation in

the Selection of New Teachers

and Principals



and administrators in a parallel fashion can make valuable contributions based on their unique experiences and perspectives within the school organization.

In terms of training, both teachers and administrators can make contributions to the process. The dotted feedback loop indicates teachers and administrators need to be trained in how to effectively use various selection tools and how to assess and evaluate candidates against prestated job descriptions and selection criteria. Training must be developmental and on-going. One graduate course, workshop, or journal article on personnel selection will not suffice. Teachers and administrators need to be aware of potential sources of rating bias and how various selection instruments can be used most effectively.

As indicated by the respondents, both teachers and administrators have valuable insights and skills which they offer for the assessment of candidates. Based on this assessment, both can then formulate recommendations for hiring based on their ratings of the candidates' strengths and abilities. Teachers do not see themselves as co-opting personnel selection decisions. The dotted feedback loop from teachers to administrators indicates the flow of teachers' recommendations to administrators, who then present both the teachers' and administrators' recommendations to the school board for the final decision to hire new staff members.

Finally, both administrators and teachers have a responsibility to bring the new staff member into the organization using the full complement of formal and informal networks. Too often personnel selection is seen as a process which ends with a recommendation to hire

or with parties signing contracts. The failure to see the process through by providing meaningful orientation programs and related services to newly hired staff members has the potential for negating all of the efforts and resources spent in previous stages of the selection process. Just because a person is hired is no guarantee of success in the organization. Orientation activities ranging from formal presentations to informal support systems can provide valuable bridges to span the gulf of unknowns between system expectations and mores and the talents, expertise and energy of newly hired staff.

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